# Proposals for a Waddesdon Parkway Avenue

## Planning Application Document

**Separate appendices:**

**Appendix 1: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment**

**Appendix 2: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal**

**May 2016**

## Waddesdon to Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station following the course of Akeman Street


**Greenways and Cycleroutes Limited**
**The Wool Hall**
**12 St. Thomas Street**
**Bristol**
**BS1 6JJ**

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## Location Map and Summary Notes




*On the line of the proposed path west of Cranwell Farm pond*

Waddesdon Village is tantalisingly close to Aylesbury Parkway Station but the heavy traffic on the A41 prevents all but the most experienced people cycling to the station. It is certainly no place for the inexperienced or families. In addition Waddesdon Manor attracts 400,000 visitors a year, almost all of whom arrive by car and for whom an extensive new carpark has just been constructed. Yet the Manor is less than 6kms from the Station, an easy cycle ride, and even a good walk – if only there was a safe way.

We propose an avenue largely running on the line of the old roman road, Akeman Street. Although there are no visible remains of the road, the hedge line of the field to the west of Cranwell Lane does correspond with the alignment of the road, and public footpaths approximate to its course.

The proposals set out here are the result of observation on the ground and discussion with the Waddesdon Estate and other landowners. There are already a number of memorable avenues on the Estate. The Drive to Eythrope is one, and the more recent Millennium Avenue stretching away from Windmill Hill is another. This Parkway Avenue need not be so grand, but it could be equally valuable as it would frame the route to Waddesdon Manor for all those who chose to come by foot or cycle, whether from Berryfields, Aylesbury or London and could be a daily route for local residents.

The seperate elements of the route are as follows:

1. Drive to Waddesdon Manor
2. Existing and planned links to the village in order that the Parkway route can be used for everyday journeys to Aylesbury by local people.
3. The New Visitor Centre. Cyclists to follow the existing one way carpark loop road, whilst walkers to use the central walkway.
4. This was the grand approach to the Manor, and now an important farm road. Run through the avenue of trees on the north side of the road before crossing it on the line of Akeman Street.
5. The Akeman Street section could be 2.6km long.
6. The ramps to the planned bridge over HS2 should be modified so as to accommodate the Avenue Route.
7. Follow existing boundaries in the interim before the HS2 works.
8. Follow the old main road and the boundary of the New College and Thames Water Fields.
9. Existing accommodation bridge under the Network Rail lines to reach Aylesbury Vale Parkway Station, and the Ruby Way Cycle Route to the town centre itself.



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# Map 1. Waddesdon

As well as making a memorable approach to Waddesdon Manor, the Parkway Avenue should provide for a convenient year round route for local residents to reach the Parkway Station and Aylesbury itself. A number of ways through to the Village are possible, as shown in the map:

a. via the existing visitor access roads travelling one way on the loop through the carpark.

b. planned new housing will result in a good local link past the school.

c. Warmstone Lane.

d. the first part of Akeman Street is best avoided as it runs clean across a wide field.

The main route can be described as follows:

1. The existing roads serving the National Trust Carpark would make for an attractive way through to the main road and the proposed route north towards Buckingham via Quainton Lane.

2. The New Visitor Centre. Cyclists could leave their bikes here if they wished to take the bus up to the Manor and couldn't quite face the hill!

3. Pedestrian spine path serving carpark leads to the proposed route to Aylesbury Parkway Station.

*Looking along the spine path towards the visitor centre*

4. Cyclists to use the one way roads through the carpark. Traffic will be travelling slowly here.

5. Construct a 2.5m wide board walk over the pond here as a continuation of the spine walkway.

*Looking from the end of the path along the line of the propsed board walk over the pond. Cut through the bank in the distance to reach the wood*

*Example of boardwalk*

6. Provide a raised pavement crossing of the carpark road or similar, and cut a defile through the low bank to reach the start of the Avenue.

7. The path to follow around the eaves of the wood either beside, or on the carpark standby track.

8. Construct a short section of new path through the edge of the wood, in order to bypass the farmyard area. This link path to be 2.0m wide.

9. Cross the ditch on the existing culverted former field access track, cross the farm road and select a suitable alignment for the path to give a good view of the pond.

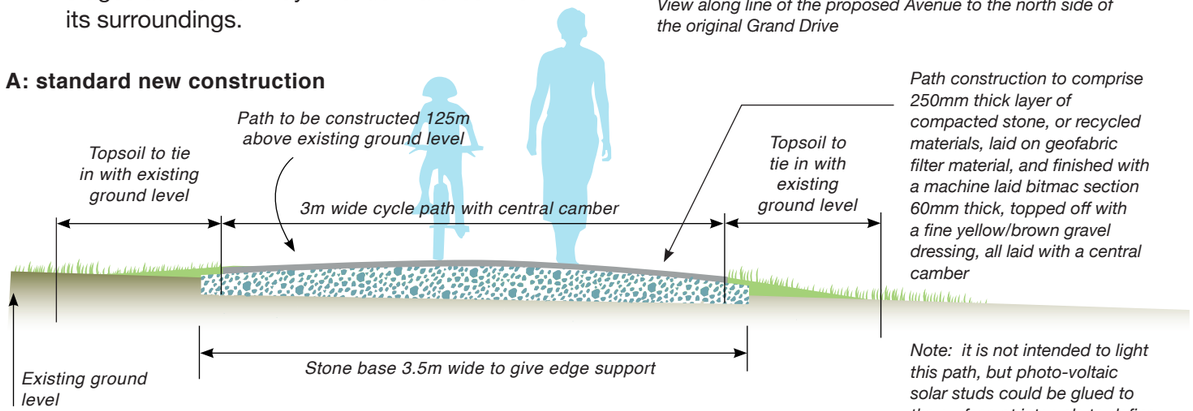
10. Choose a way through the wood, felling 2 or 3 trees to create the best alignment. Fence the boundary of the farmyard and plant hedging on the edge of the wood. The path to be constructed as "no dig" past the trees.

11. Emerge from the wood to follow the wide grass swathe on the north side of the Grand Drive. This area was part of the original deer park and any planting should be sympathetic. Note that there are a number of landscape designs which could be included in the overall concept of the Parkway Avenue including, formal avenue tree planting, copses and clumps of trees, hedged green lanes, and fences with open views over the countryside. The final arrangement will evolve, partly in response to planting to shield the HS2 railway, and its final arrangement may only be completed in stages as the Parkway Avenue matures into its surroundings.

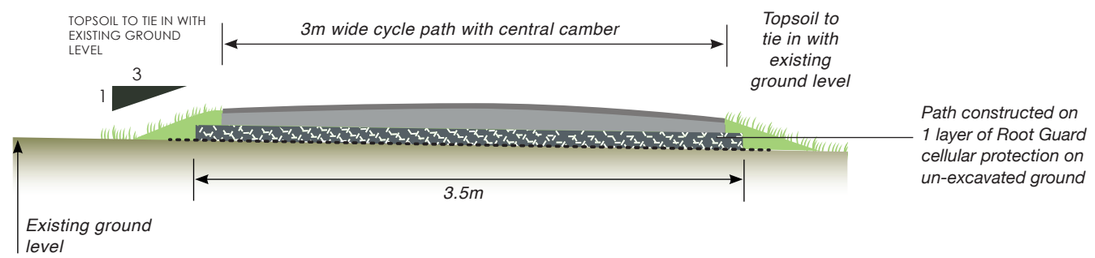
12. The former drive is the principal farm road and it would not be appropriate for the general public to use it, especially in the numbers we hope will enjoy the Parkway route to the station. We suggest that the alignment of the path weaves slightly from side to side so that users don't have too long a view ahead, and so that this section of the route is differentiated from the section on the roman road which will necessarily be straight.

*View along line of the proposed Avenue to the north side of the original Grand Drive*

**A: standard new construction**




**B: Tree root protection**



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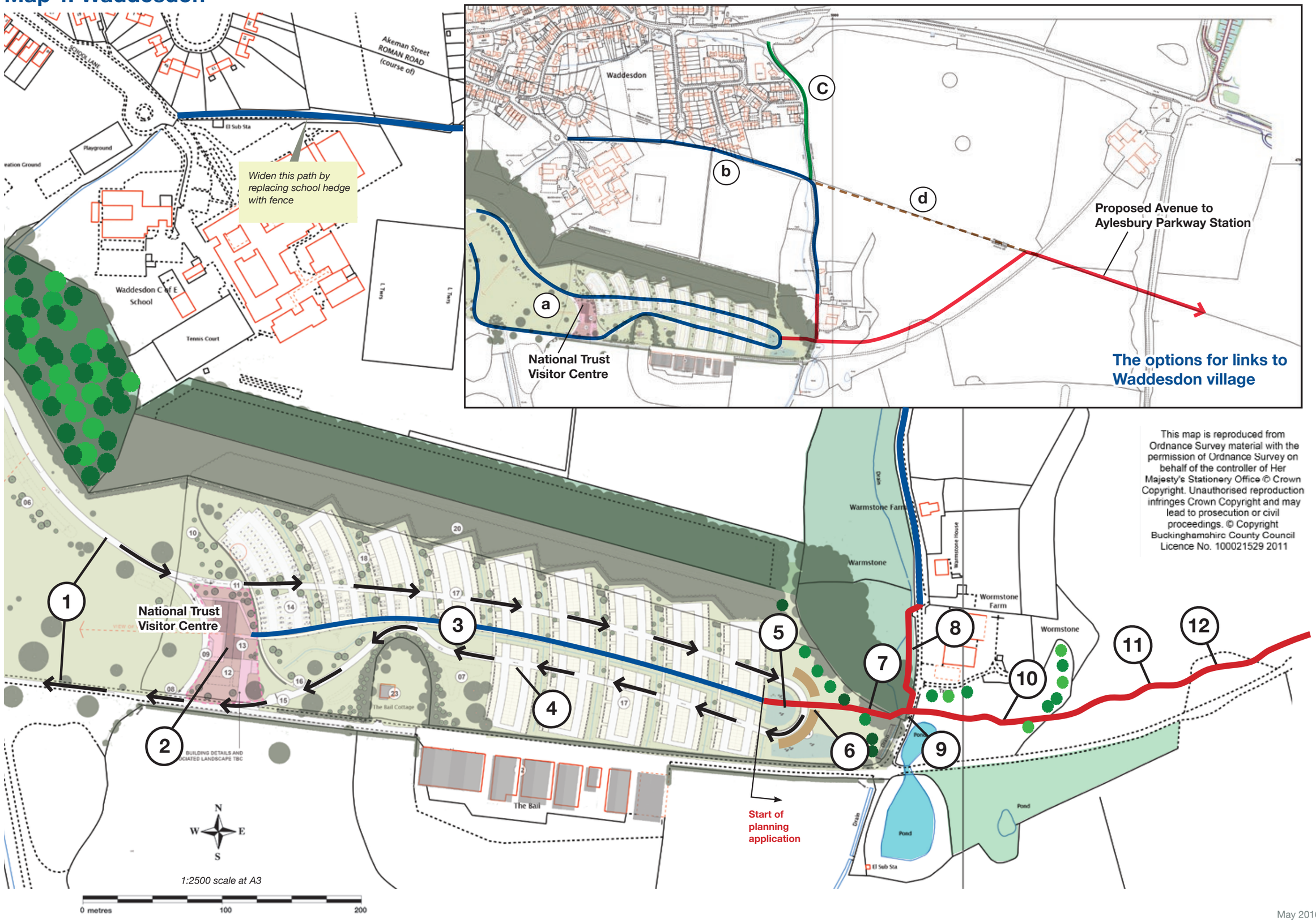
# Map 1. Waddesdon

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# Map 2. The Parkway Avenue along Akeman Street

The proposed route joins the line of Akeman Street halfway along the Farm Drive. There is no visible sign of the road along its course over fields. Archaeologist's advice will be needed watching the construction progresses here, but as the excavation for the path will be scarcely 200mm deep it is improbable that anything of interest will be found, as the whole area has been ploughed to greater depth than this. Aligning the proposed path with the roman road will protect it against future disturbance and give the travelling public the frisson that they are actually walking and cycling on the route the Romans used.

The Archaeological Study (appendix A) provides preliminary assessment of the whole corridor and its recommendations are to be adopted for this project. In particular, any planting will be set back from any suspected historical remains which may be found following trial trenching at intervals under the supervision of an archaeologist.

13. Continue along the wide margin to the Grand Drive, weaving the path from side to side to limit the view of hard surface ahead as the verge cuts across from one side to the other.

14. Provide a raised crossing or similar of the main farm road and mark this crossing carefully as it is the point where the Parkway Avenue joins the course of Akeman Street.

15. Veer around to follow the margin of the field, or even better join the line of Akeman Street over this section.

A. Have seats and picnic areas at intervals choosing sites with a good view and a local significance (e.g. Junction of paths).

16. Here, and elsewhere along the route, culverts, ditches and field drains will be required to maintain the current arrangements where the path might disturb them. Appendix B sets out the Ecological Study and this project adopts its recommendations.

17. The crossing of Upper Winchendon Road has good visibility at this point. Provide a chicane either side to slow down cyclists, and the Highway Authority to install appropriate warning signs on the road. Note that this is the only public road crossing on what is otherwise an almost traffic free route.

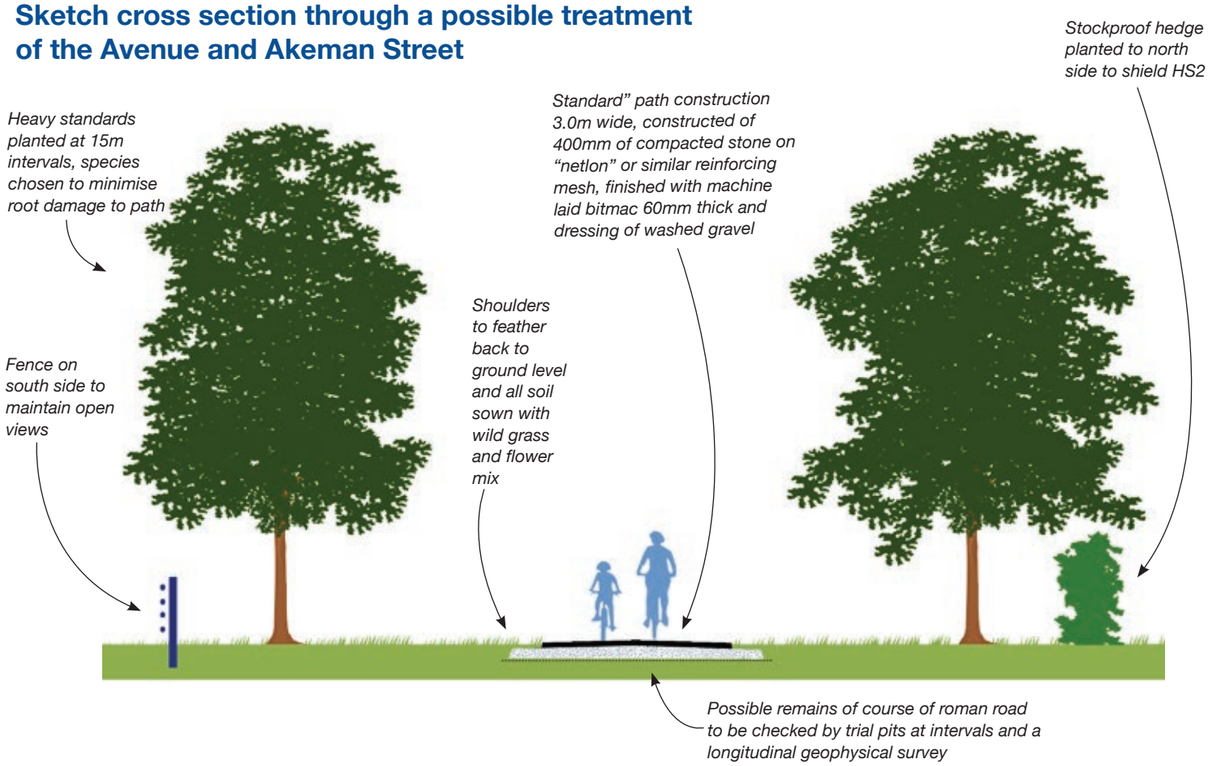
18. Run along the line of the roman road, with avenue trees both sides. It is proposed that existing public footpaths, running along this corridor but not exactly following the line of roman road, are diverted onto the Parkway Route, but not until the new path is well established and the public used to following it.

*Example of newly planted avenue near Buckingham*

19. Provide a farm crossing at a convenient point as the Avenue cuts right across the centre of this field.

B. Consider marking significant junctions with the Roman Road with sculpture, perhaps with a Roman theme?

## Sketch cross section through a possible treatment of the Avenue and Akeman Street




*View of Gaius Sentius drinking fountain at site of roman road crossing Bristol and Bath path*



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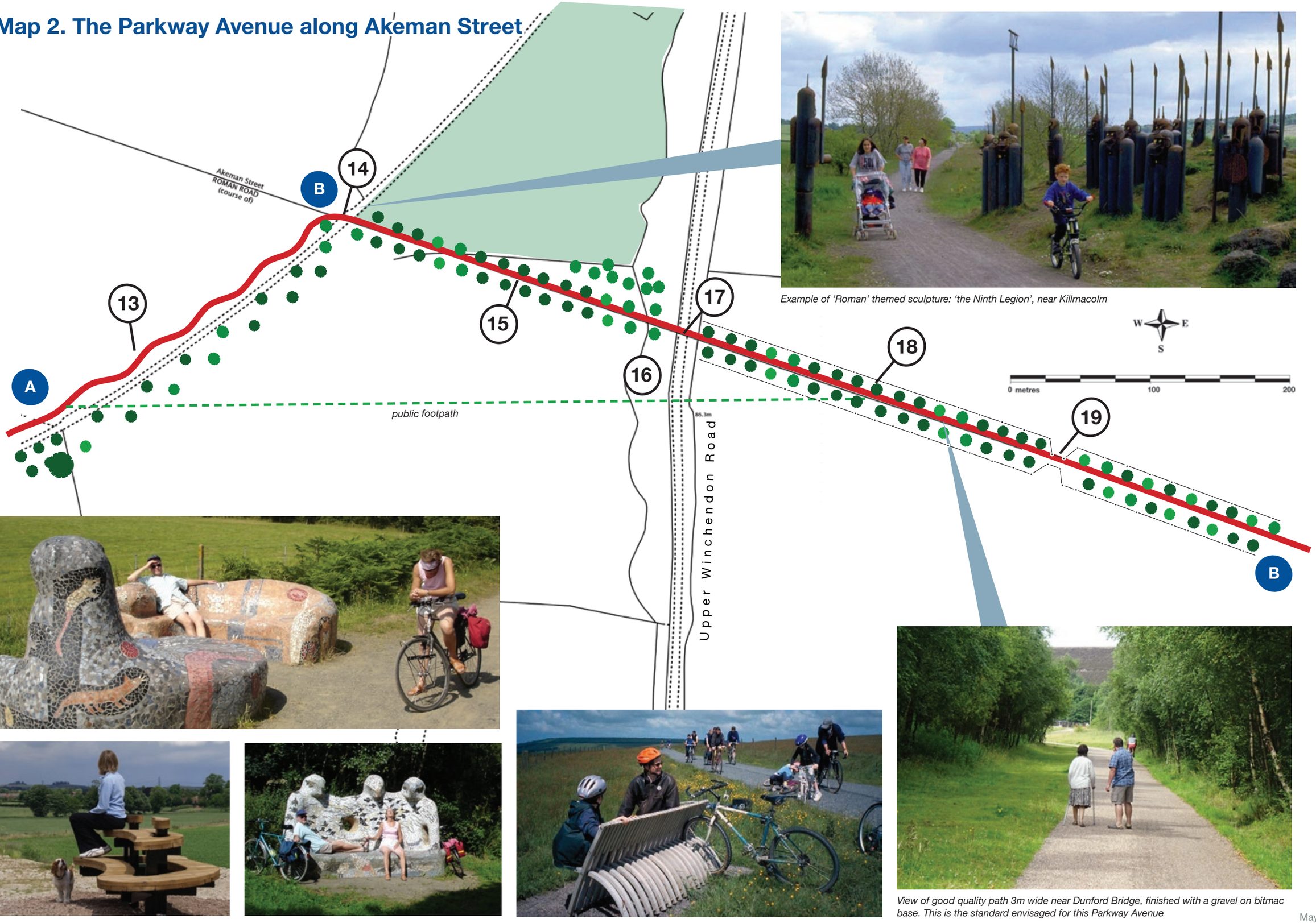
# Map 2. The Parkway Avenue along Akeman Street






*Example of 'Roman' themed sculpture: 'the Ninth Legion', near Killmacolm*





*Some examples of seat possibilites*





*View of good quality path 3m wide near Dunford Bridge, finished with a gravel on bitmac base. This is the standard envisaged for this Parkway Avenue*



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# Map 3.

Akeman Street is the Saxon name given to the significant roman road connecting the Fosse Way at Cirencester and Watling Street at St. Albans. Some parts of its route are already used as public paths including a 10km stretch between Tackley and Stonesfield in Oxfordshire. The 2.7km section here proposed for the Waddesdon Parkway would be the only substantial traffic free section for cyclists, as well as pedestrians, although in Aylesbury itself, the Ruby Cycleroute along the Bicester Road follows the course of Akeman Street between Rabans Lane and Gatehouse Road.

Akeman Street also passes the frontage of the National History Museum in Tring, but unfortunately it would not be wise to recommend cycling on from Aylesbury to Tring, as for the whole way the roman road is now a heavily trafficked road. It could though be a focus of a ride via the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union Canal, returning via the Wendover Arm, and such an excursion would be an interesting companion to that of visiting Waddesdon Manor itself.

20. At this point cross the ditch via a culvert and kink to the south side of the hedge. Whilst this is not on the line of Akeman Street it has the views and the sun. This kink would also be a good point for a viewing mound. A pair of mounds would provide a feature of the route, and each could have a seat looking along their respective straight sections. Such an arrangement helps with the informal surveillance and overall security of the route.

21. Fence the path off from the grazing with 7 wire sheep mesh and two lines of barbed wire. Keep the view open for a distant sight of the Manor.

22. Detour to the south of the pond (which is a feature of the route especially if the fencing can be removed).

23. Provide safe, defined crossing of road.

24. Aim straight to re-join the Akeman Street. The section of field to the south might be best managed as a separate small grazing area?

25. Cut through the hedge (removing the currently very difficult stiles).

*View over stile looking along the line of Akeman Street*

26. Cross this field on the line of the roman road.

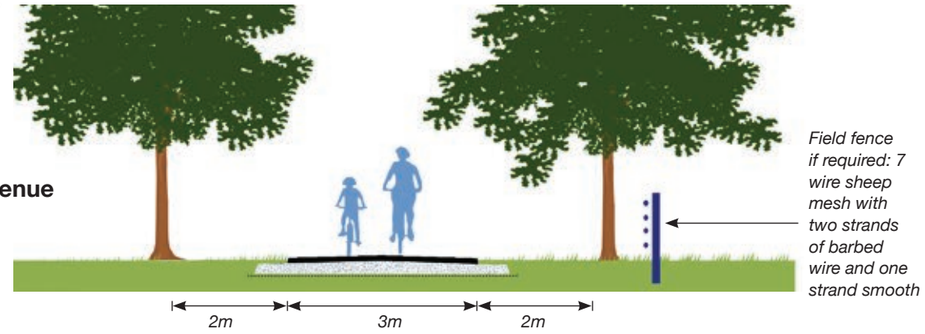
27. This might be a good picnic field. The old tin barn could be moved north to the other side of the Avenue if required. Or remove the hedge to the south of the small field so as to incorporate this patch into the larger field beyond.

28. Cross these last two fields on the line of the roman road. Provide farm crossings for each field.

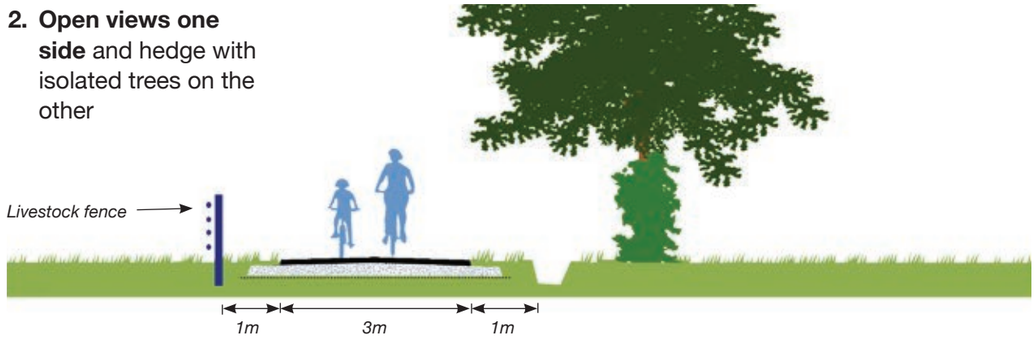
29. Culvert this and any other ditch.

**Landscape Features**

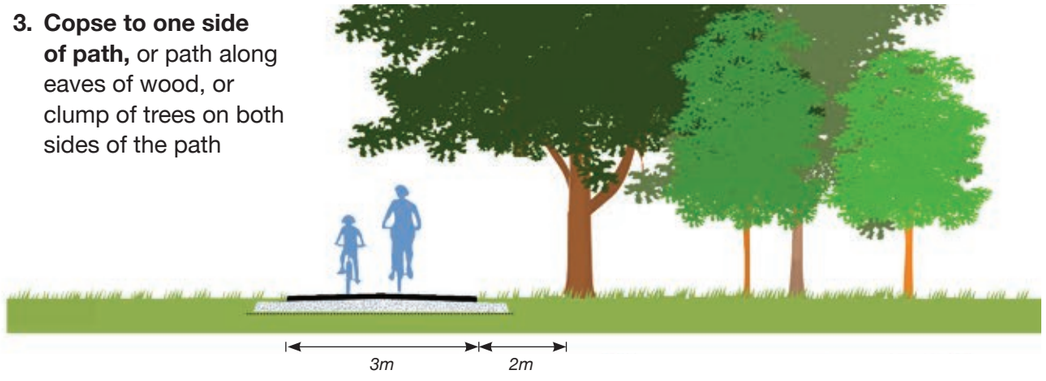
**1. Formal Avenue**



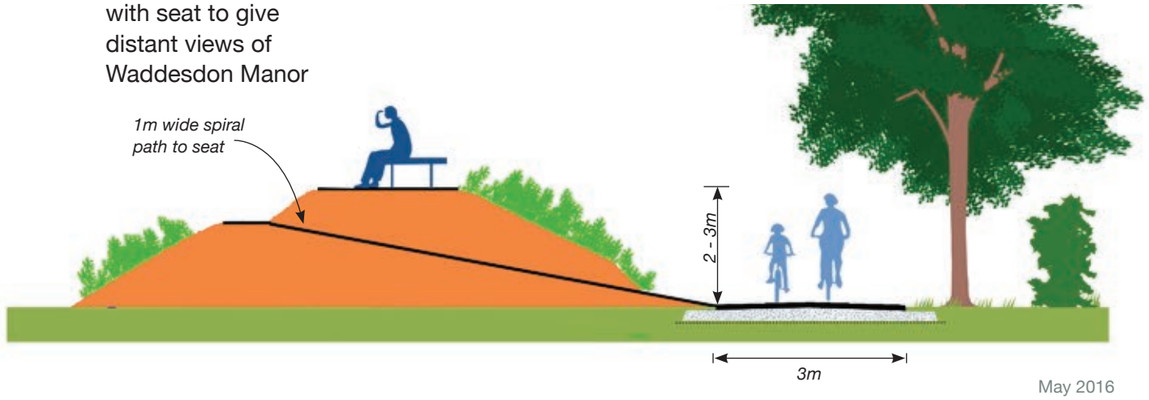

**2. Open views one side** and hedge with isolated trees on the other




**3. Copse to one side of path,** or path along eaves of wood, or clump of trees on both sides of the path




**4. Low level mound** with seat to give distant views of Waddesdon Manor

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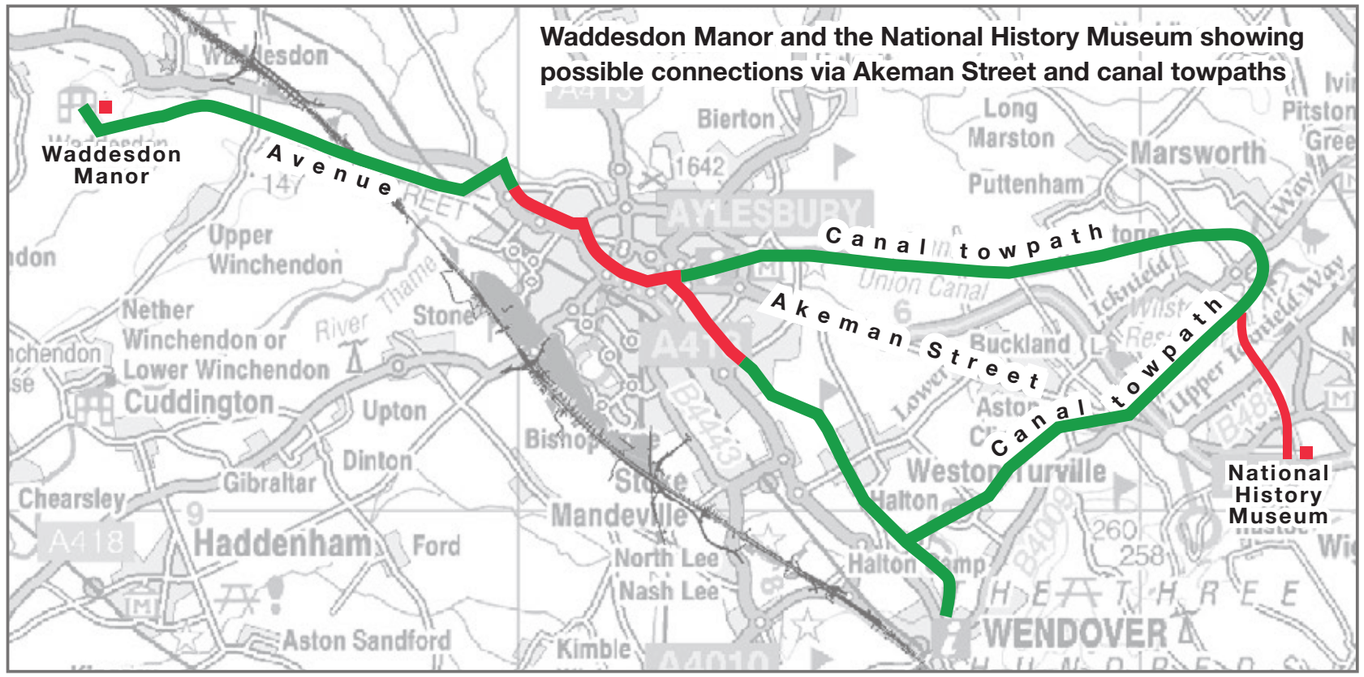
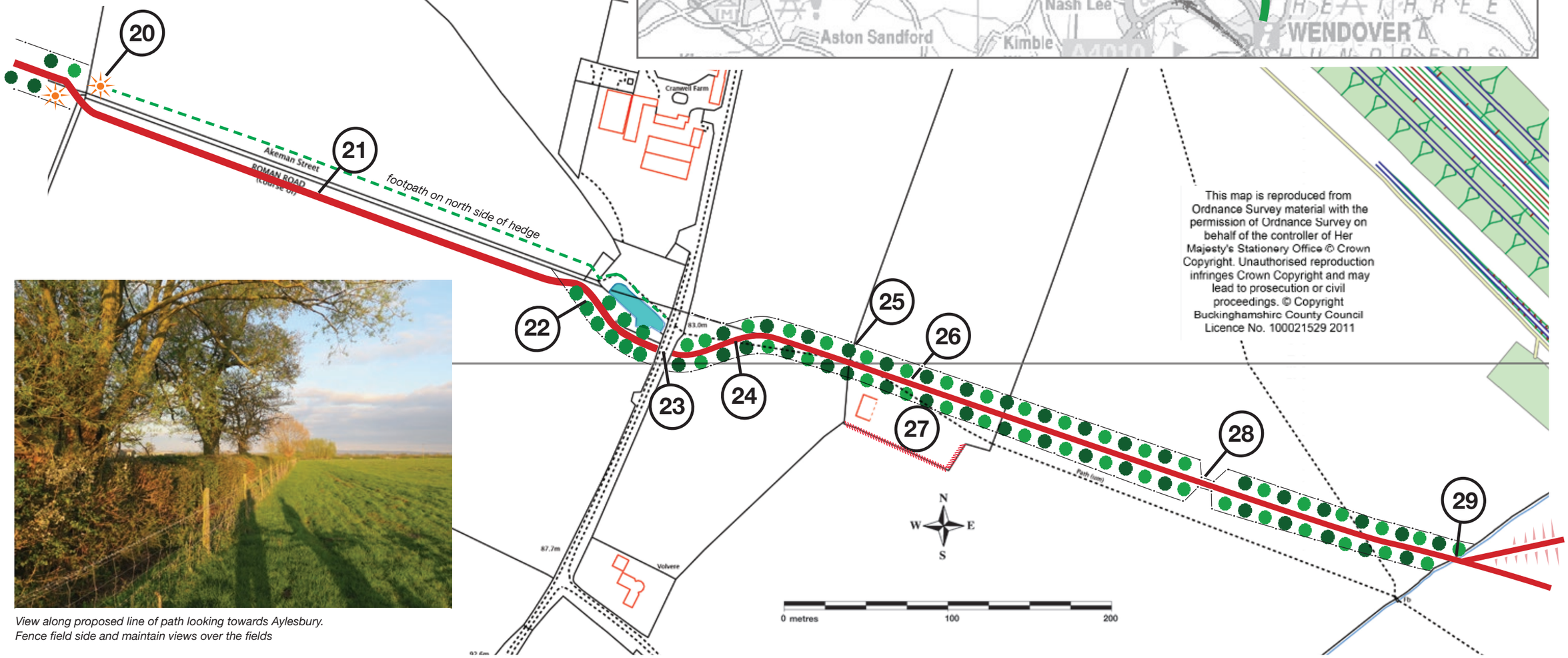
# Map 3.

*Lookout mound at York*

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*View along proposed line of path looking towards Aylesbury.*
*Fence field side and maintain views over the fields*

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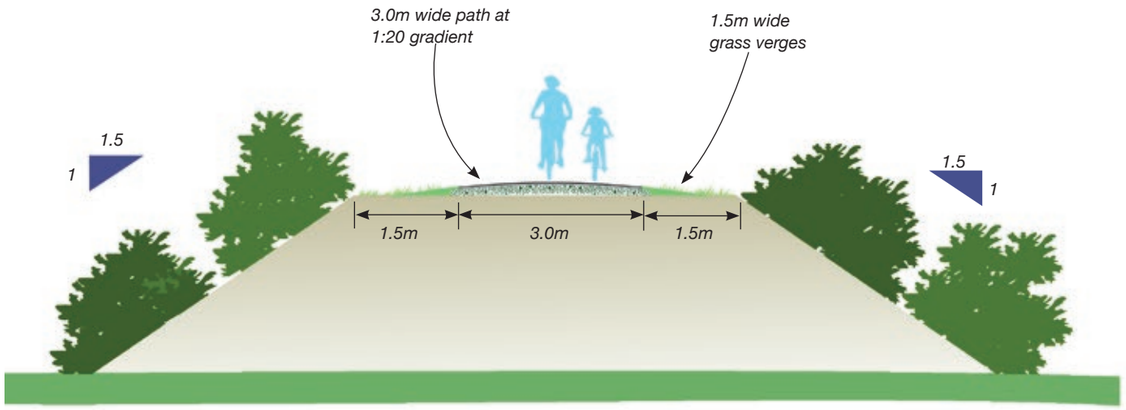
# Map 4. Crossing HS2

Over this section there needs to be an interim route following the alignment of existing paths pending the construction of HS2 Rail. The planned bridge over the railway will be suitable for the public to cross the railway, but the current ramp arrangements need to be revised to meet the gradient, width and alignment of the Avenue Route. HS2 Rail are prepared to do this work provided the revised ramps have planning consent and Council approval. For this reason these ramps are shown as part of this planning application, even though for the interim the public will use an alternative route.

30. The main ramps on both sides of the bridge should should have a gradient of 1:21, a path width of 3m and 1.5m wide verges either side, all as shown in the cross section.

**Cross section through HS2 bridge approach embankments**




31. The top of the ramp should be widened to provide a viewpoint for HS2 train spotters, and as this will be the public's first view of Waddesdon Manor (coming from the Station), a good seat with clear views should be provided.

32. The bridge should be 4.0m wide between parapets to provide for an effective 3m width.

33. The final alignment of the Avenue would best follow the line of Akeman Street across the remaining corner of this field. This detail could not be implemented until after the completion of HS2 and its exact arrangement may vary depending upon circumstances at that time.

34. The interim Avenue Route should follow the alignment of existing paths and field edges, and be constructed to the full 3m wide standard as it is anticipated that path usage will be considerable even in these early years.

34a. Provide a narrow cattle grid and wicket gate on this boundary to the New College Land. This detail could be associated with a new culvert crossing of the ditch at this point.

35. Re-join the former main road at this point. Modify the existing field gate access to give clear access for walkers and cyclists. This will require a self-closing wicket gate and standard narrow cattle grid adjacent to the existing field gate, similar to the example shown below. Once beyond the gate the track ramps upto the old road level from where there is a distant view of the Manor and at which point a large seat should be placed. As this is almost on the line of Akeman Street and near the town of Fleet Marston a historical theme would seem appropriate.

*Example of wicket gate and cattle grid*

*View along field edge which is the current bridleway route. The sealed path should be constructed along the hedge side of the grass strip leaving plenty of space for equestrians to use the verge beside the path*

*View of York and Selby path showing horses on adjacent verge*

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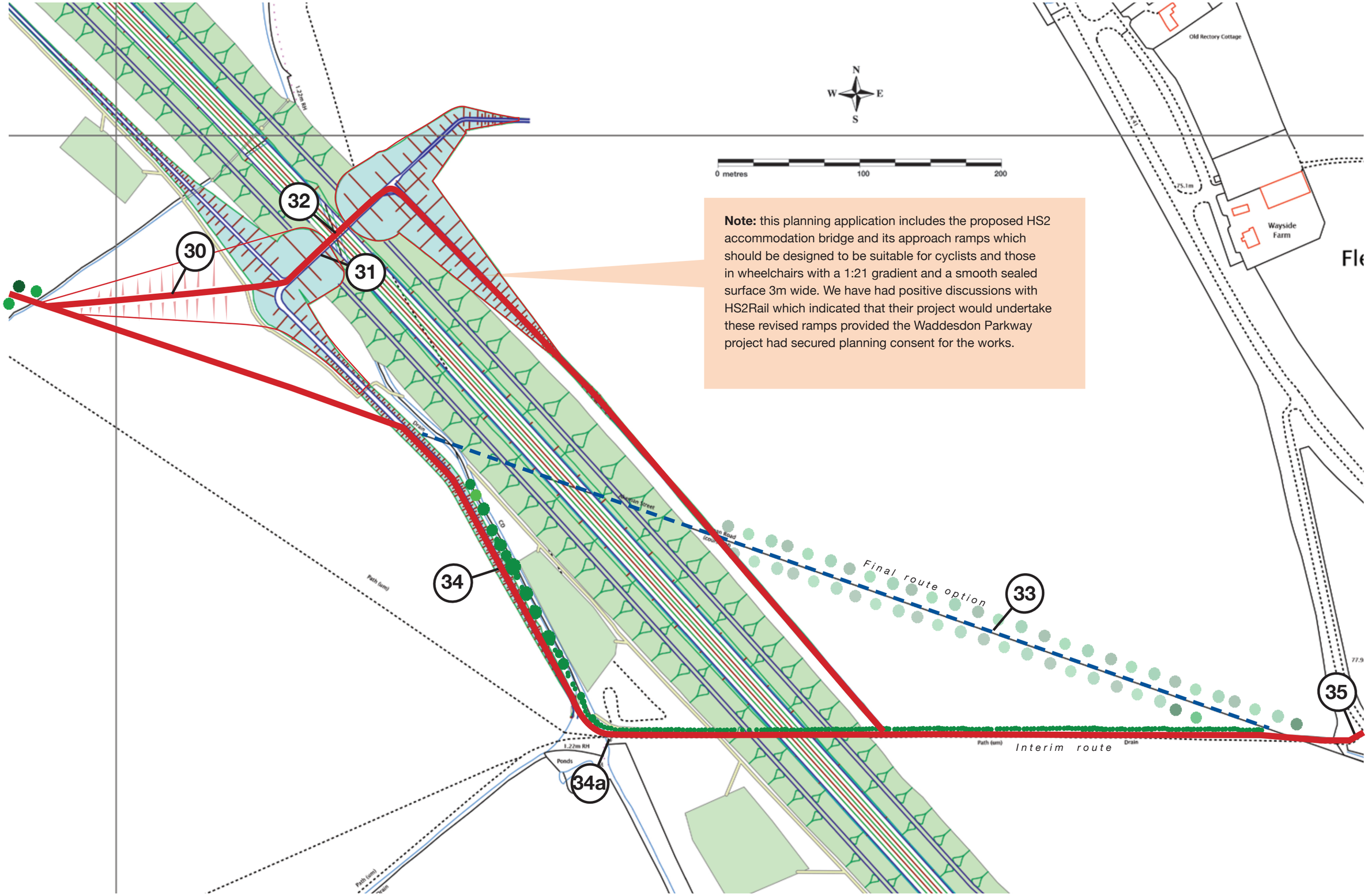


**Note:** this planning application includes the proposed HS2 accommodation bridge and its approach ramps which should be designed to be suitable for cyclists and those in wheelchairs with a 1:21 gradient and a smooth sealed surface 3m wide. We have had positive discussions with HS2Rail which indicated that their project would undertake these revised ramps provided the Waddesdon Parkway project had secured planning consent for the works.

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# Map 5.

As the final section of the Roman Road cuts across fields and passes through residential gardens it would be better to follow the old main road, which is now cut off, and then follow the field margins to Parkway Station. This adds little to the distance but does suffer from traffic noise on the nearby main road. The station itself is reached via a small accommodation bridge under the railway at which point this avenue route from Waddesdon can be marked with an entrance archway or similar welcoming detail.

36. The width of the old main road could be reduced by planting avenue trees within the carriageway leaving 4m of tarmac for the avenue.

37. Once past the last house in Putlowes Drive, cut across the wide verge, culvert the ditch and move into New College's field.

38. It would be worth while to reinforce the planting along the wide verge to the A41 in order to reduce the impact of traffic on path users. The path itself should be lined with avenue trees in order to maintain the concept of a grand approach to Waddesdon Manor. The fence should be carefully detailed so as to ensure that there is no possibility of livestock breaking through to the main road. So we are showing a double fence planted with hedging in between in order that we have security in depth.

*The Waddesdon Parkway Avenue avoids the A41 completely*

39. Bridge the river – a span of 6m-8m or so would be sufficient as the downstream culverts under the main road are not large. Note that the level of the bridge should be the same as the adjacent road, and the path should approach on low causeways to ensure that it is dry and above possible flood water. The bridge will be seated on low concrete abutments each founded on a triangle of three piles.

*View of typical small bridge*

40. Turn the Avenue to run up the side of the Thames Water field. Here the railway embankment provides protection against the A41. The boundary would again comprise a double fence and hedge

41. This existing railway accommodation bridge provides a particularly convenient link to Aylesbury Parkway Station. Although it is not large, it is sufficient, and its floor could possibly be slightly lowered to give more headroom. This bridge might also be a useful link to the down platform if the railway tracks are doubled.

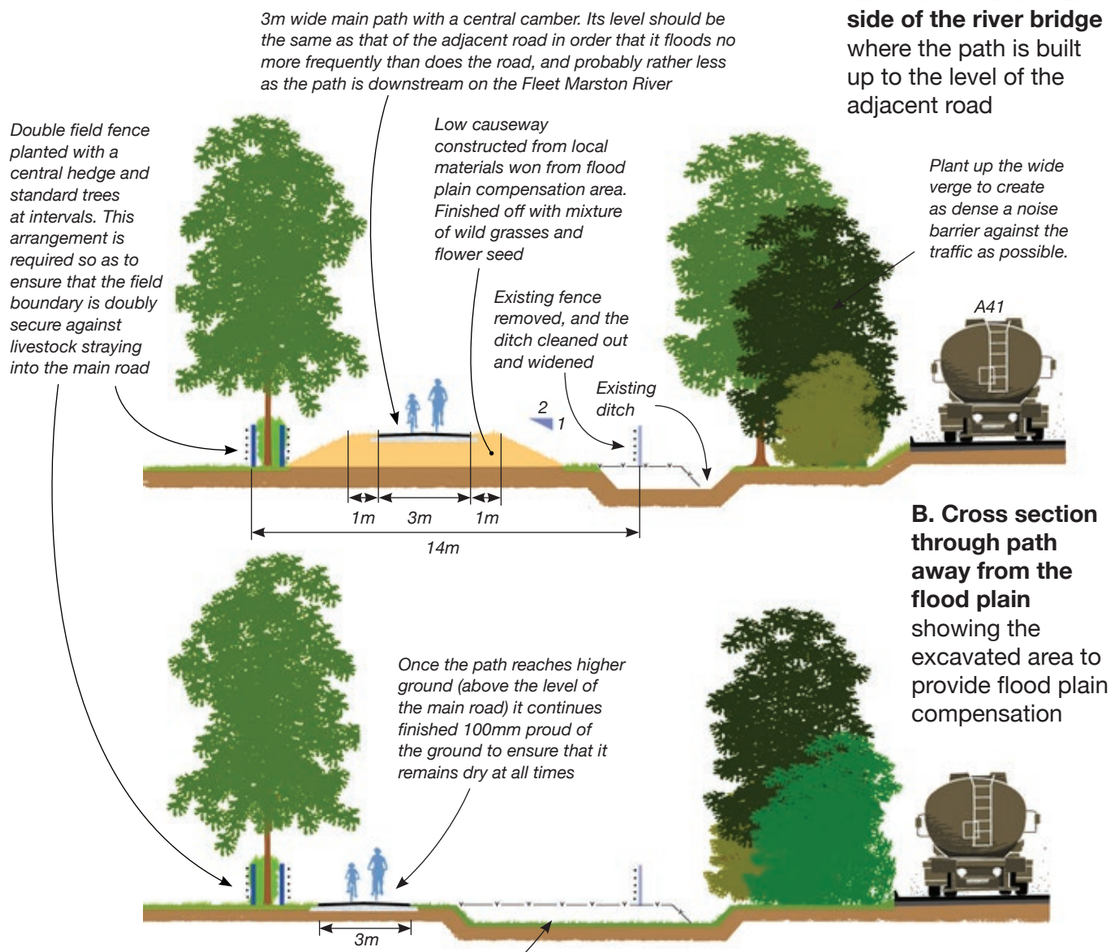
*View through station bridge*

42. Make a level link to the station building. This will require a small alteration to the existing car parks, and even here the avenue planting should feature.

43. This would be a good location for the Waddesdon Bike Hire Centre. As the distance to the Manor is quite a long way, and too far for many to walk, the provision of Waddesdon Bikes (trailers and even motorised wheelchairs) will be essential if large numbers of the public are to visit the Manor and Estate this way. Whilst this is not the place to discuss Bike Hire in detail, a satisfactory operation might include hire at each end, so that bikes could be returned to the station for reuse maybe 2 or 3 times each day, each way, whilst the public were exploring the House and gardens on foot.

44. Mark out a link across the car park to join the existing Ruby Way Cycling route to Aylesbury -see detail.

45. Incorporate a continuation of the Parkway, through future development to reach the Thame Valley.




**A. Cross section either side of the river bridge** where the path is built up to the level of the adjacent road

**B. Cross section through path away from the flood plain** showing the excavated area to provide flood plain compensation

*Excavate beside the path to provide compensation, level for level, by volume and by area, for the Zone 2 and Zone 3 part of the flood plain taken up by the low causeways either side of the river bridge. Note that this compensation arrangement will be similar both sides of the river although the sketch here specifically shows the length of path parallel to the A41. Alongside the railway boundary the position would be reversed and the excavated area would be best arranged to be between the path and the field edge fencing. The floor of the compensation areas could be planted as a wet or damp area with appropriate plants.*



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## Detail arrangement of the Aylesbury Vale Station area and link to the existing cycling routes

1. Network Rail have a very basic works access to their tracks at this point. It would create more space for making a good piece of work to the subway if this track was shifted a little to the north of the subway along the line, if this is possible.

2. The existing accommodation bridge under the line makes for a convenient start for the route to Waddesdon, and also a possible connection under the tracks to a future platform. For this reason it would be useful to make up the subway works to a standard suitable for this dual use, if this is possible. Fence both sides of the public space to match existing security fencing. See page 16 for details.

3. Possible area for Network Rail works vehicles and access to the track.

4. Avenue route along field edge to Waddesdon.

5. Extend existing brick walkway through to the Avenue, so as to provide a direct pedestrian route to the station entrance.

6. Remove four existing car parking spaces and keep the way across the works access track clear as at present.

7. Consider possible locations for a small bike hire center as this will be required as the route grows in popularity

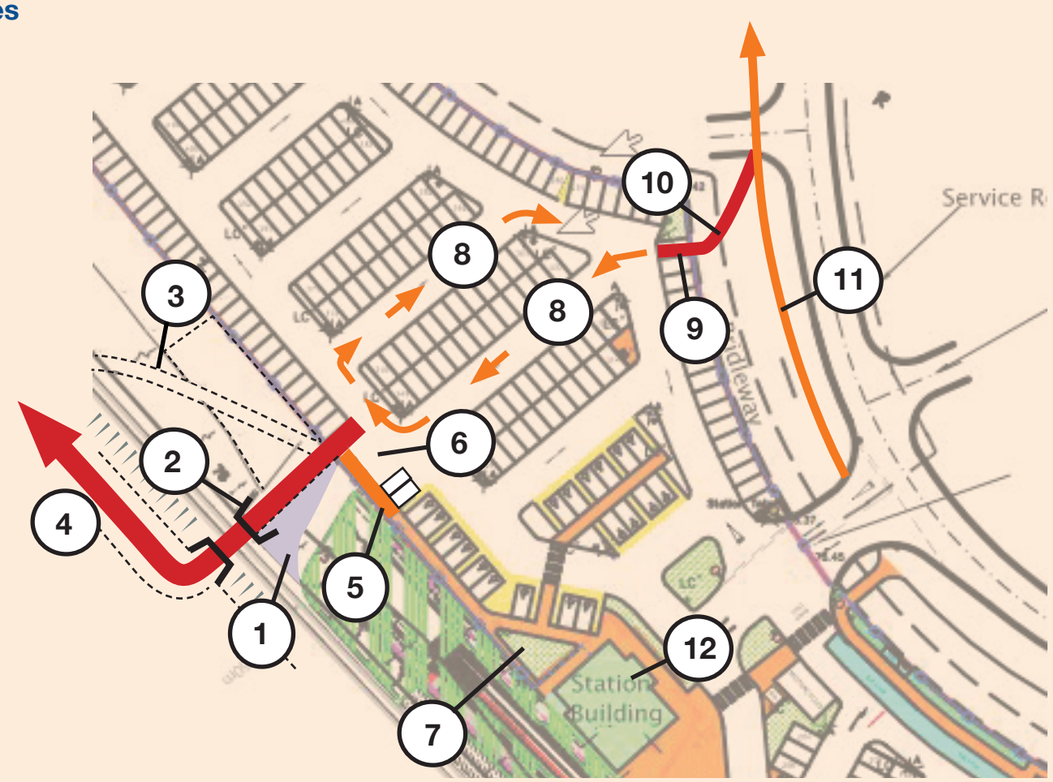
8. Mark cycle logos down these two aisles of the carpark to lead cycles through to the cycle track to Aylesbury.

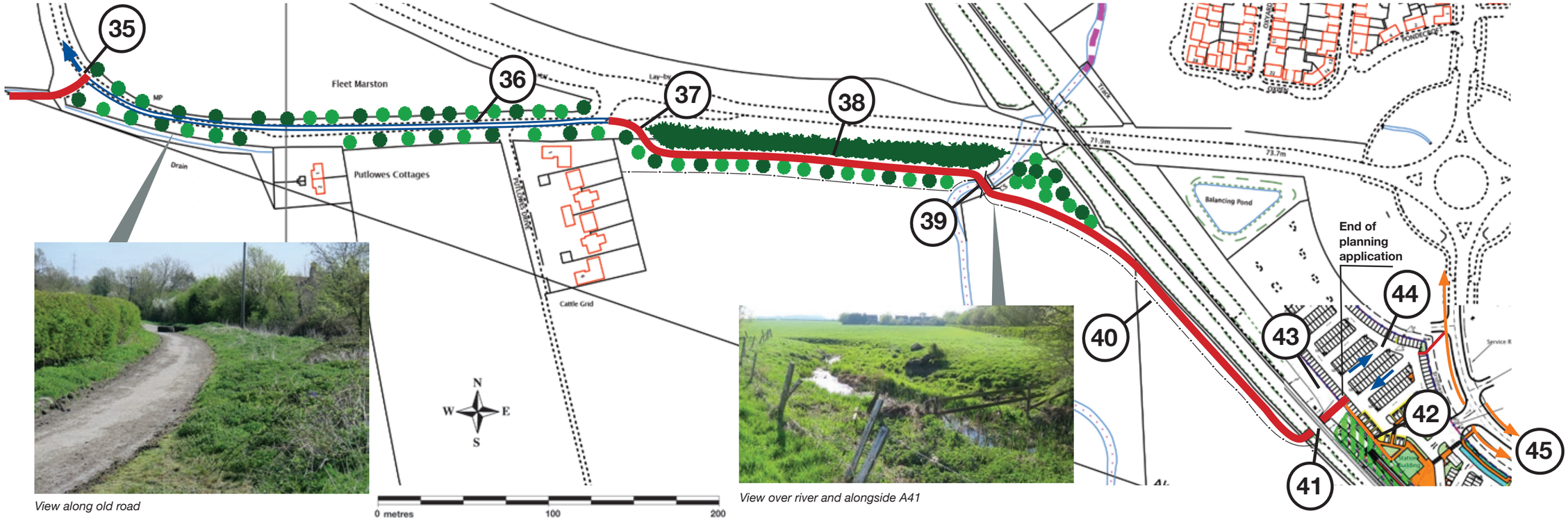
9. Remove one carpark space to provide for the dedicated route.

10. Construct new link up slight slope to join existing cycling routes

11. Ruby Way to the centre of Aylesbury

12. Existing station buildings.




*View along old road*

*View over river and alongside A41*



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# Proposed diversion of adjacent public footpaths onto the Parkway Avenue alignment

The map shows the footpaths which can be conveniently diverted onto the line of the Parkway Avenue

**WAD/7A/1** Diverted to the Avenue and at its western end to run northwards to the west of the farm boundary to join Warmstone Lane.

**WAD/7B/1** The section north of the Parkway Avenue to be deleted.

**WAD/7A/2** The eastern section of the path to be slightly diverted to the Avenue (if it is not exactly aligned already). The western end to be diverted to the Avenue.

**WAD/7A/3** which runs north of the hedge to be diverted to the south of the hedge and the pond onto the alignment of the Avenue.

**WAD/7A/4** to be diverted onto the adjacent Avenue where this does not exactly line up with the route of the footpath.

**WAD/6B/1** to be truncated at the Avenue and to lose its southern most point.

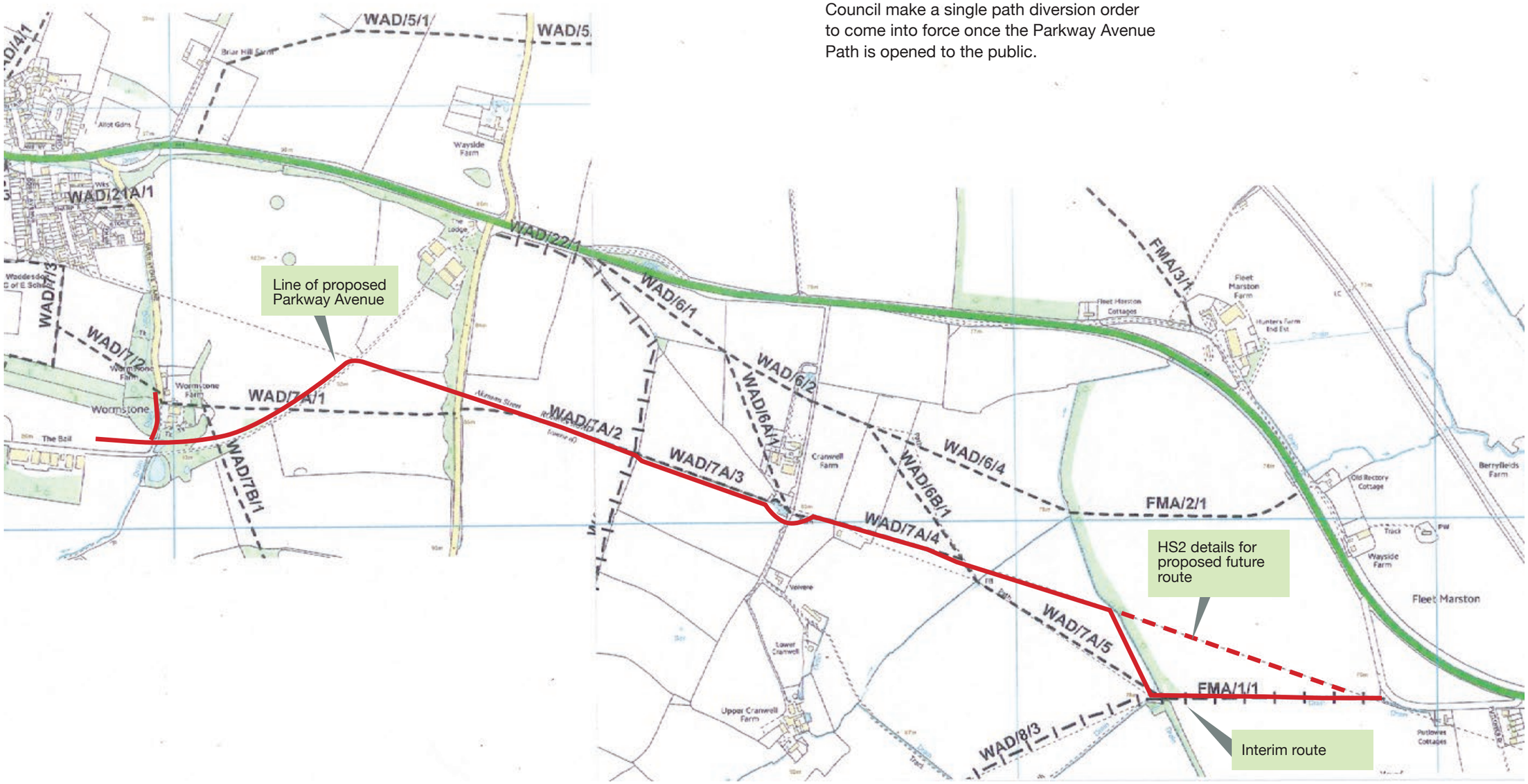
**WAD/7A/5** to be diverted to run from the end of WAD/7A/4 along the line of the Avenue as far as the boundary of HS2 Rail, and then to follow the temporary line of the Avenue south to join FMA/1/1.

Note that **WAD/8/3** and **FMA/1/1** will upon the completion of HS2 Rail be diverted to cross the railway on its new bridge.

It is proposed that Buckinghamshire County Council make a single path diversion order to come into force once the Parkway Avenue Path is opened to the public.

The Avenue will then have the status of being a public right of way on foot, with permissive use by cyclists and in parts by equestrians.

No walking routes currently available will be adversely affected by these diversion proposals, which will have the real benefit of providing a smooth, dry and all weather surface over its whole length.



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## Archaeology

Akeman Street was a major Roman road in England that linked Watling Street with the Fosse Way. Its junction with Watling Street was just north of Verulamium (near modern St Albans) and that with the Fosse Way was at Corinium Dobunnorum (now Cirencester). Its course passes through towns and villages including Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring, Aylesbury, Alchester (outside modern Bicester), Chesterton, Kirtlington, Ramsden and Asthall. Parts of the A41 road between Berkhamsted and Bicester use the course of the former Roman road, as did the Sparrows Herne turnpike between Berkhamsted and Aylesbury. A minor road between Chesterton and Kirtlington also uses its course. Other parts are in use as public footpaths, including a 6-mile (9.7 km) stretch between Tackley and Stonesfield that is part of the Oxfordshire Way.

The origins of the road's name are uncertain but certainly date back to the Early Middle Ages. Some have suggested that "Akeman" derives from the Anglo-Saxon words for "oak-man". Others have suggested a connection with Bath, which the Anglo-Saxons called Acemannesceastre (Acemannes apparently being derived from the Roman name Aquae Sulis). It is unclear how this might have become associated with the road, but one possibility is that the name was originally used for the longer stretch of road from Bath.

There are no historic signs of Akeman Street on the ground.  Recent excavations west of Waddesdon (tree planting) did not reveal any tangible evidence of the roman road.

Over the Parkway Avenue, the footpaths WAD/7A/2, WAD/7A/3 and WAD/7A/4 appear to follow the course of the road and maybe the remnants of the ancient route.

The field boundary and hedge immediately to the west of Cranwell Farm also appears to follow the road alignment, possibly on its south side.

Over the proposed Parkway Avenue section, the fields have been repeatedly ploughed and if there are any remains of the road they will have to lie at a level of 200-300 run below field level or lower.

We proposed to construct the Avenue on the line of the roman road with an excavation of no more than 150mm as shown in the cross section, or as a no dig/no disturbance construction which would have the advantage that the path would drain at all times.

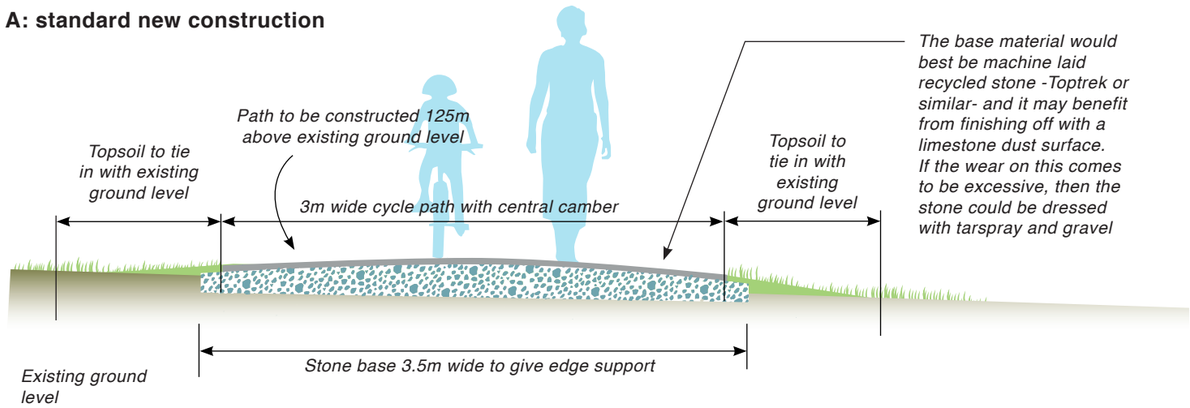
This arrangement will have the twin advantage of protecting any possible remains of the road and of giving the path users the interest of actually walking or cycling on a peaceful traffic roman road alignment.

## Advance Works

The recommendations of the Archaeological Report will be adopted including undertaking a geophysical survey to try to identify any traces of Akeman Street and the roman town of Fleet Marston. The no dig/no disturbance construction is likely to be appropriate except in the case of definite indication of remains in which case advance excavation will be required and the design modified accordingly.

If remains are found then no tree or hedge planting should be carried out within 5m of the edge of the road.

**A: standard new construction**



## Wildlife, Ecology and Landscaping

The Wildlife and Ecology report is attached (Appendix) and the project will follow the report's recommendations.

The various tree and hedge planting options are shown on page 8. The final combination of avenue tree planting, hedging, copses and small woodlands will be a result of wider planting schemes associated with HS2 Rail. Whatever the arrangement it is intended that the Parkway Avenue will create a memorable approach to Waddesdon, the Village and the Manor.

## Design and Access Statement

The purpose of this project is to create a high quality, all weather path suitable for year round use on foot and bicycle. The path will be rural in nature. It will be finished with a fine gravel surface bound to the sealed material below. It will not have hard edge kerbs or formal street furniture. It will not have lighting, although the incorporation of surface mounted P.V light studs will be considered to delineate the edges of the path.

The path will have good access to Waddesdon Village and the Manor, to intermediate public roads and rights of way, and to Aylesbury Parkway Station where it will connect with the extensive network of cycling facilities in Aylesbury itself.

The project will take active steps to encourage visitors to Waddesdon Manor, to come by train and then walk or cycle to the Manor. A cycle hire operation mayl be provided at the Station.

The path will be designed throughout to be suitable for wheelchairs, prams and buggies and it will be arranged with seats at intervals, with views for the elderly and less active.

## Construction and Works Programme

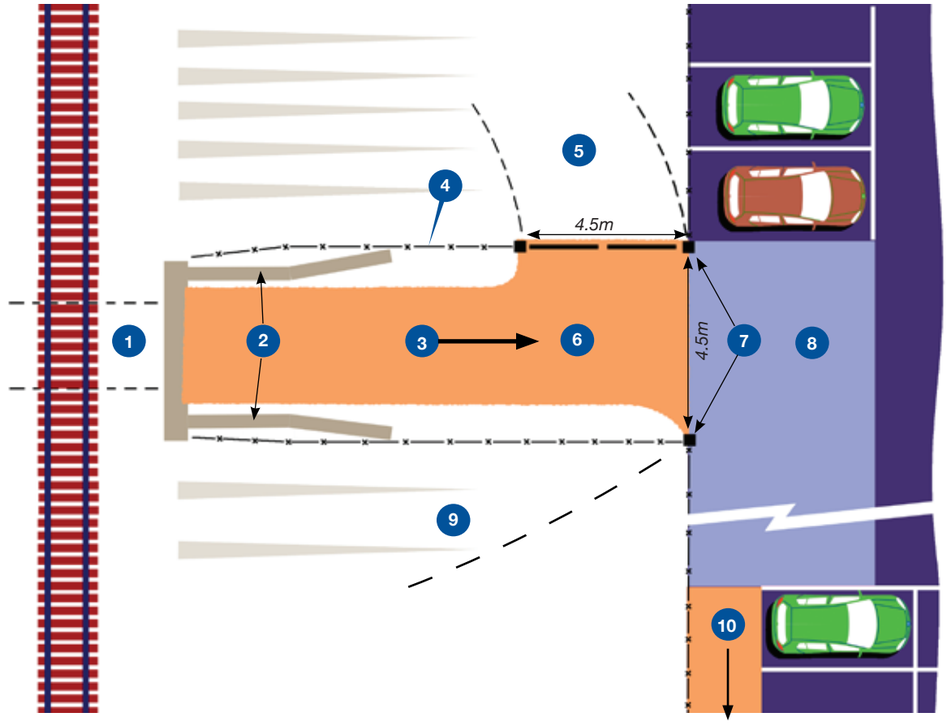
This project will be carefully constructed using small plant and equipment running along the corridor of the path to create the minimum of disturbance.

The site offices, storage and equipment will be at the farm buildings adjacent to the main lodge where hard standings are available.

The principle materials will be crushed stone for the base of the path and bitmac for the final surfacing.

In total 7000 tonnes of materials will be required, amounting to four 20 tonne lorries per day over the anticipated 100 working days. The material will be delivered by public road for convenient access to the path.

As far as possible all construction will be carried out by local contractors familiar with fencing, planting and path construction.




**Sketch of arrangements at station tunnel access**

1. Existing subway 2.4m wide. Lower floor level by 300mm to enhance headroom clearance. Consider Waddesdon Parkway signing across headwall above subway.
2. Clean out wing walls either side, repair and extend in matching brickwork as necessary.
3. Level an even gradient to level of carpark.
4. New security fencing with 4.5m wide gate for rail construction vehicles. Fencing to match existing station mesh. Reuse existing gates mounted on new posts.
5. Construct new rail access track.
6. Asphalt full width in this area as well as through the subway.
7. Existing gate posts to remain, and existing boundary fencing.
8. Lose 4 carpark spaces to allow existing brick path to be extended, or colour whole area to denote space to be kept clear of parking
9. Abandon temporary track.
10. Existing brick footway to station with parking for the disabled unchanged.



- Binding Margin -